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REVIEWS.

RECENT WORKS ON SHAKESPEARE AND THE DRAMA.

In "Shakespeare and Voltaire" (Scribners) Prof. Lounsbury continues his subject of the Shakespearean Wars. It is undeniably a brilliant piece of writing, bringing out in full the resources of Prof. Lounsbury's art, his keen logic, trenchant analysis, and merciless exposure; yet the very zeal and persistence in the iterations and repeated proofs of Voltaire's Shakespearean imbecility tantalize, and we cannot help feeling that an extenuation, at least in some points, might be made for the French writer. A Frenchman, and that in the eighteenth century, when many of Shakespeare's countrymen went critically astray, could not be expected to have our point of view of to-day, and, however crafty or petty in much, Voltaire was far more than the small residuum left in our minds by a perusal of Prof. Lounsbury's book. To show how imperfectly Shakespeare's art was understood for a long time by would-be critics even among his fellow-countrymen, to emphasize how Voltaire, who first established the dramatist's fame in France, still misunderstood and later even maligned him, many of the philosopher's positions being untenable and positively absurd—to bring all this out clearly and with pointed effect, this is Prof. Lounsbury's service to literary students.

Have we a trustworthy painting of Shakespeare's face in existence? is a much-mooted question, and the claims of various portraits to genuineness have in their day been considered. Mr. Sidney Lee, in his "Life of Shakespeare," followed authority and singled out the so-called "Droeshout portrait" and the Ely Palace portrait, both now at Stratford, as the only ones bearing "any definable resemblance to the folio engraving or the bust in the church." For it is believed that the folio engraver must have had a painting before him as original, and certainly we like to think of some one making a portrait of the bard from life. "A New Portrait of Shakespeare," by John Corbin (John Lane), is an argument on behalf of the Ely portrait against the "Droeshout" as this original. The book, a fine piece of artistic workmanship, is provided with

reproductions of both paintings and of the folio engraving. The discussion is based upon undoubted personal conviction, but where so many subjective elements enter, the whole matter is full of pitfalls. Where much is in doubt and cannot be proved, it is not surprising that the destructive part of Mr. Corbin's argument carries more conviction than his labor at construction.

Much the same must be said of "Shakespeare and the Rival Poet" (John Lane), in which Mr. Arthur Acheson, of Chicago, adds to the attempts to identify the rival poet of the Sonnets as George Chapman, to throw light upon Shakespeare's relations with his brother poets, and to demonstrate that the rivalry was an enduring and bitter one. According to this ingenious theory, Rosaline, Cleopatra, and Cressida were all poetic idealizations of that willful demon, the "dark lady" of the Sonnets. In the twenty-first Sonnet Shakespeare's satire, it is held, was directed against Chapman's poem, "The Amorous Zodiac"—an inference by no means obvious—and on this depend most of the later steps of the argument. Prof. Minto was the first to seek to identify the rival poet as George Chapman, the translator of Homer, lyrist and dramatist; Mr. Sidney Lee thinks he was one Barnabe Googe, and so on. Many books have been written on the Sonnets—the supposed "key with which Shakespeare unlocked his heart"—and we may be sure many more will be. We have Mr. Dowden's moderate view of a natural meaning, and we have Mr. Sidney Lee's extreme destruction of other extreme theories. Mr. Lee doubtless went too far, but he cleared the atmosphere considerably in extending our knowledge of the Sonnet as a literary species. That many of the Sonnets are early, that much has been made good. But as to their arrangement, meaning, possible symbolism, or autobiographical import, it seems useless to seek, still more to attempt to identify persons through hypotheses more or less fanciful. And yet that Shakespeare scholarship has grown apace and that our knowledge of the Elizabethan drama has been widely extended by late investigation, we cannot deny. Mr. Acheson's labors throw new light upon two great poets and call attention to new phases of their work,

though we may not accept all the conclusions he draws from his comparisons.

Prof. Tolman has contributed a monograph to the Decennial Publications of the University of Chicago on "Shakespeare's 'Love's Labour's Won,'" reviewing the several theories held and offering some evidence and conviction that by this title may be meant "The Taming of the Shrew," a play on which Prof. Tolman had done previous work in determining its sources and its authorship. Numerous views have been held that a genuine Shakespearean play with this title has been lost, which is hardly likely; that this is merely a second title for "Love's Labor's Lost" used in Mere's notable list to secure symmetry; or, severally, that it is another title for "Midsummer Night's Dream" or for "The Tempest" or for "All's Well"—a hitherto commonly accepted theory, since parts of the play show evidences of early authorship—or for "Much Ado" on account of parallelisms and contrasts with "Love's Labour's Lost." Finally we have Prof. Tolman's suggestion that it may be "The Taming of the Shrew," because this play was written before Mere's list, and its omission is hard to explain on other grounds, and that by the change of title to "*The Shrew*," as opposed to another play with a similar title, "*A Shrew*," Shakespeare was reworking and reclaiming a play as his own.

Prof. Moulton's well-known inductive methods in the study of literature have produced another volume, "The Moral System of Shakespeare" (Macmillan). It is always interesting to hear what Prof. Moulton has to say, though we are not persuaded that the accompanying diagrams and analyses, however suggestive, constitute the best method of dealing with Shakespeare before a class or for imparting the literary value of a play. Prof. Moulton believes that the drama is based upon life, that moral laws may be discerned in life, and that the dramatist, being true to life, has thereby necessarily illustrated these principles, and so produced a "moral system." That Shakespeare's work is at basis profoundly ethical, as all great literature and art become, may be accepted; but it is possible that some of the details are the result of a too particular attitude of mind. Still Shakespeare is the great and typical Englishman, and

the English mind and nature in every age have loved moralizing.

A number of good school editions of the "Merchant of Venice" have appeared to meet the demand consequent upon this play being introduced into the requirements for admission to college. We notice a new edition by W. J. Rolfe, of Cambridge, Mass., with a working over and diminution of the critical apparatus (American Book Co.), and other editions by Prof. F. E. Schelling, of Pennsylvania (American Book Co.), Prof. T. M. Parrott, of Princeton (Henry Holt), and Prof. Robert Sharp, of Tulane (B. F. Johnson Co.).

We need never expect editions of Shakespeare to cease. A new one, four volumes of which have appeared, is "The First Folio Shakespeare," edited "with notes, introduction, glossary, lists of variorum readings and selected criticism," by Charlotte Porter and Helen A. Clarke (Crowell). That these editors have produced such acceptable work as the "Camberwell" Robert Browning and the "Coxhoe" Mrs. Browning, and that the printing is from the De Vinne Press, are guarantees of the daintiness of each volume. The idea, too, is happy—to go back to the First Folio and reproduce in a convenient pocket size the text of 1623, that of Shakespeare's fellows and editors, in the original spelling and punctuation, with notes of all important changes made since. In the abundant and usually excellent notes or "Literary Illustrations" some weakness in Latin may be detected. The same editors and publishers give us the "Pembroke Shakespeare" complete in twelve twelvemo volumes, which reproduces the same text as the "First Folio," but without its extensive critical and literary apparatus.

The first volume of the long-heralded "Elizabethan Shakespeare: Macbeth," "with critical text in Elizabethan English and brief notes illustrative of Elizabethan life, thought, and idiom," by Mark Harvey Liddell (Doubleday, Page & Co.), has appeared, and is dedicated to the editor's master, Prof. Napier, of Oxford. It is an extremely scholarly piece of work, and has involved hard and painstaking labor—and yet it is a question whether it will supersede other work and how far it is needed just in this form. The appearance is against it as

compared with Dr. Furness's *Variorum* edition. It is essentially a library book, and libraries generally will purchase it to complete their Shakespeare editions now rapidly multiplying. Dr. Liddell's views will in cases be cited, his work will be one more gigantic book of reference, if completed; but that it prove to be more, with all the editor's scholarship, zeal, and labor, may be honestly doubted. Perhaps a new Shakespeare Dictionary or Lexicon, combined with a grammar and syntax and mooted readings and questions, in the light of modern linguistic science, would have served scholarship better than a new edition where an instructive note is either lost or must be searched for toilsomely out of an overcrowded mass of details. It is hardly a question whether the armor of Shakespearean annotation will not break down in the attempt to furnish a play with too great paraphernalia.

We have studies not only of Shakespeare but also of the development of the drama before Shakespeare. A splendid example of this interest is the volume of "Representative English Comedies: From the Beginnings to Shakespeare," edited by Prof. C. M. Gayley, of California (Macmillan). The editor introduces the work with a scholarly "Historical View of the Beginnings of English Comedy," and after two of John Heywood's "Interludes" and "Roister Doister" and "Gammer Gurton," Lyly and Peele and Greene are each represented by a comedy, followed by "The Two Angry Women of Abyngton." Each play is preceded by a critical essay respectively by Mr. A. W. Pollard, Prof. Flügel, Mr. Henry Bradley, Prof. G. P. Baker, Prof. Gummere, Prof. Woodberry, and Prof. Gayley. The volume closes with a characteristic essay by Mr. Dowden on "Shakespeare as a Comic Dramatist." Where all is good, it is ungenerous to discriminate; but Mr. Pollard's judgment on Heywood's place in comedy, Mr. Bradley's ascription of "Gammer Gurton" to William Stevenson and not to Bishop Still, and particularly Prof. Gummere's insight into Peele's use of folklore for making fun, have a special interest.

The Clarendon Press of Oxford has projected a series of new and scholarly editions of Shakespeare's predecessors and contemporaries. If the other volumes result so happily as these

first ventures, it will prove to be a notable set. Those that have appeared are "The Works of Thomas Kyd," edited by Frederic S. Boas, in one volume, and "The Complete Works of John Lyly," edited by R. Warwick Bond, in three volumes. Not only do the Kyd and Lyly editions supply a great need—for there was none at all of Kyd's writings, and the two volumes of Fairholt's Lyly had become antiquated—but they are excellent instances of clean and modern scholarship, models of English clearness united with the scientific apparatus of German methods. The special literary value of these volumes is the emphasis on the relations of both the authors to Shakespeare, and their unquestioned influence upon the latter's dramatic work. "The Spanish Tragedy"; or, "Jeronimo is Mad Again" was known as Kyd's, but little else was known. The other play of "Jeronimo," about which much discussion has turned, Mr. Boas denies to Kyd. But a rather good array of material is left to him; and his personality, from being shadowy, has become fairly definite. Kyd's personal relations with Marlowe and Kyd's accusation of Marlowe leave a less favorable impression. By a remarkable process of deduction it has been concluded by scholars that among the plays of Kyd is the original Hamlet tragedy, now lost, which was the basis of Shakespeare's great drama. As Kyd's work, together with Marlowe's, was the most definite influence on Shakespearean tragedy, so Lyly's prose plays had a marked influence upon the form and structure of Shakespearean comedy. Even if Mr. Bond is inclined to exaggerate this influence, it is still undeniably great, passing into many details, while Lyly's imaginative story of "Euphues" marks an era in the artistic development of English prose. Further companion volumes of the Clarendon Press are two on "The Mediæval Stage," by E. K. Chambers, a far-reaching discussion of mediæval development which shows admirable grasp. A full "List of Authorities" precedes; the material is treated under the general divisions of Minstrelsy, the Folk Drama, the Religious Drama, and the Interludes, while numerous Appendices full of original documentary illustration conclude the work. All six of these volumes are indispensable to students of the Elizabethan drama and to libraries.